

## THE TOUR OF THE BUNNIEWINKS—*continued.*



ON Monday morning they started by the very first train for Penzance and the Land's End. Zummy and Drummie had wanted dreadfully to buy a book they saw at Heard's about the Land's End and Lyonesse and King Arthur, but Mr. Bunniewink would not let them : he said it was all nonsense about King Arthur.

But Mr. Bunniewink was wrong. The stories about King Arthur are very grand. He and his knights were good, brave men ; and we ought to be the better for reading and thinking of great and wonderful deeds, even though we can't quite understand all about them ; and very often the reason we don't understand is, that we are not good and humble-minded enough ourselves. Zummy and Drummie were sorry to leave Truro without sailing any paper boats in the little streams in the streets, it would have been such a pleasant thing to do.

On the way from Truro to Penzance, they passed through an out-of-doors *kitchen*, that is to say *Cook's Kitchen Copper-mine* ; and a wonderful place they thought it, with miners for cooks, and copper ore for meat, and furnaces for kitchen fires, while the engine-bobs kept going up and down, keeping everything at work.

Soon after the train came to a dead stop on the top of an immensely high viaduct. What could be the reason ?

Mrs. Bunniewink immediately began to scream.

Mr. Bunniewink looked to see if there was anything about stopping there in the Guide-book, and finding nothing, he got into a rage at once, and put his head out of window to know what was the reason of this delay.

And there were the guards looking so indifferent, and they said they had dropped the shovel and had just run back to pick it up.

Mr. Bunniewink was beginning to scold everybody, when the train was off again.

They were a good deal astonished at the country they passed through. Where the mines were, everything looked desolate. There were high heaps of rubbish that nothing would grow on, engine-bobs for ever going up and down, and tall chimneys, some smoking and some not.

The "Bal," or mine girls, with their very short petticoats, very white

aprons, and sun-bonnets, with very wide strings indeed, delighted Drummie so much that she begged to leave school and be a mine girl. But Mr. and Mrs. Bunniwink both said "No."

Then they saw some miners just come up from the bottom of the mine with candles stuck in their hats to light them about underground. And they could hardly believe they were the same people whom they saw walking about the road looking so smart and very often dressed almost entirely in white.

The country grew softer and richer-looking as they approached the garden district of Penzance, which supplies the London market with the first brocoli and new potatoes; then the line ran through a bit of salt marsh; then past St. Michael's Mount, where long, long ago dwelt the great giant Cormoran, and so into Penzance station.

They were all sitting quietly in the inn in the middle of the town that evening, Zummy and Drummie dreadfully sleepy, but trying to look wide awake that they might not be sent to bed, when a tremendous noise was heard in the street. It came nearer and nearer. Zummy and Drummie tried to look out and see in the dark what was happening. Mrs. Bunniwink, who was resting on the horse-hair sofa, declared she was trembling all over, and was ready to scream or faint.

Mr. Bunniwink put on his comforter, goloshes, and macintosh. The noise came nearer and nearer. Voices of men and boys shouting and screeching were heard, and two great eyes of light came on in the darkness, then was a sound of horse's steps and wheels.

Mrs. Bunniwink gasped, and wished she was back in England. She thought the natives were having a fight, and when they had finished they would fall on them, poor defenceless strangers.

Mr. Bunniwink said, "Defenceless, Maria! Think of *me* and of my pistols. However, this commotion is probably caused by a fire, and we hear the sounds of the coming engines."

But Zummy cried out, "'Tisn't an engine, pa. It's a dog-cart with sailors in uniform in it, and they are driving at such a rate: do let us go out and see."

Mr. Bunniwink said, "No," and Mrs. Bunniwink suddenly recollected Zummy and Drummie ought to be in bed, and sent them off instantly, and they slept all night without even moving their little fingers; but Mr. and Mrs. Bunniwink were awakened at dead of night

by the sound of wheels and a galloping horse; and Mr. Bunniewink, who jumped up directly to see what he could see, again saw that dog-cart go by manned by the same sailors. And he could not understand it.

The next morning he asked the waiter the meaning of the disturbance, and the man was sour and silent, and would only mutter, "Coast-guard, sir; preventive men, sir."

On hearing this Mrs. Bunniewink made up her mind she was in a den of smugglers, and insisted on removing immediately to the Alexandra Hotel, on the shore.

Zummy and Drummie were charmed with the change. They could get down on the beach in a minute, and they went off at once to see what a number of fishermen, collected on the beach, were doing. And they found they were "drawing a seine."\*

Bob, bob, went the corks on the water.

Pull, pull, went the men; presently the water looked all alive with silver, and the great seine was "drawn" full of fish. There were turbot and whiting and whiting pouters; there were sea woodcocks and greenboned garricks, and soles and tubs, and plaice and all sorts. Zummy and Drummie nearly jumped into the midst. An old sailor caught Drummie and held her back, and said, "Mustn't go there whatever, my little dear."

But Zummy was there already, and he seized a monstrous plaice and hugged it to his heart.

"Put him down, my dear," said the fisherman.

"No, thank you," said Zummy; and he began dancing about with the poor flapping fish in his arms; but he soon slipped down all among the fish and the ore weed, and a great crab caught hold of his heel in its claw. Zummy roared and let go the plaice, and the fisherman picked him up, and a very dismal, dirty figure he looked. He had to go back to the inn, and be washed by boots before his papa or mamma could bear to look at or smell him.

Zummy had hardly come back cleaned before Mr. and Mrs. Bunniewink began to miss Drummie, and Zummy said he thought she was still on the shore watching the fish being packed to go to London; for most of the fish caught at Penzance goes to London. Hundreds of baskets of fish may be seen on the Cornish trains.

\* Large net.

Then the door opened, and an extraordinary object appeared, a kind of moving heap of ore weed, with a pair of little girl's feet at the bottom, and a voice came from the ore weed and said, "Please, papa and mamma, I am a mermaid."

Mrs. Bunniewink was horrified, and more horrified still when the ore weed began to fall off, and Drummie appeared, with face, neck, and hands stained bright yellow by the iodine in the weed. The chambermaid couldn't clean her, and for some days she had to go about as an orange-coloured young lady; and she didn't mind a bit, excepting when Mrs. Bunniewink would try to take out the stains with salts of lemon, as if they were iron-moulds.

Mr. Bunniewink said, "Iodine is wholesome."

In the afternoon the Bunniewink family went out walking again in procession. But Zummy and Drummie were made to walk in front of their parents this time, that they might see they got into no further mischief.

First they saw the serpentine works, at which they were astonished.

In the yard outside they saw large and small red and green stones, but they didn't think much of them. Then they went into a room where there were a lot of men working, and lathes going, and stones polishing. And they thought rather more of that; and when last of all, they were taken into a room filled with all sorts of beautiful finished things, they began to think very much of these serpentine works.

There were large pillars for large halls, and tiny charms to hang on watch chains, card plates and vases, tables and shirt studs.

Zummy and Drummie walked round the room and wondered. Mrs. Bunniewink bought a small stone table, which was a heavy anxiety for the rest of the tour. She also bought the children each a stony little heart.

The next day they made a grand expedition to the Land's End. Mr. Bunniewink put on goloshes, macintosh, and comforter, took his pistols in one hand and his umbrella in the other, the weather being lovely.

Mrs. Bunniewink had four hampers of food packed. She "dreaded starvation in a desolate region."

When the fly came Mr. Bunniewink declared the horses were too small.

The driver said, "If the horses were any bigger or fatter they couldn't do the work of the country."

Mr. Bunniewink described "how much larger horses were in London."

And the man replied, "Then you had better go to London for your horses."

Mr. Bunniewink was annoyed, and would have knocked the man down (if he could), had not Zummy at that instant mounted the box, and flourishing the reins and whip called out he was going to drive. So Mr. Bunniewink had to scold him, and he pulled poor Zummy backwards into the fly, which looked absurd and made Zummy roar.

At last they were off, through gardens and meadows first, then across a brook and they were in the wild country. Just then they met a man riding without a saddle: when he came to a certain turn in the road he jumped off, and told the horse to go home, and the horse went home immediately. Their own little horses trotted away so gallantly up and down hill, that Mrs. Bunniewink was sure they were running away, and kept on entreating the driver to "take care;" and he was obliged to tell her "the horses were going be-au-tiful, the little dears."

They went, and they went, and they went, till they came to "The last house in the 'country," where they left the fly; and when they walked round to the other side of the inn, they found they were at "The first house." Zummy and Drummie were delighted with the idea of this First and Last House Inn. They went on over the down till the turf changed to rock, and the grand grey granite rocks grew lower and lower till they sank into the Lyonesse, and the clear green waves of the Atlantic broke into white foam at their feet. A hazy line in the distance showed where the Scilly Islands were sleeping among their flowers; along the coast were the Grand Cliffs, Cape Cornwall, and the Longships lighthouse. Overhead was the blue sky "embracing all." No sound save the waves, and the whirring past of a single bird, broke the stillness; and when they turned back, there were Sennen Church and the ruins of Uny Chapel—homes to greet the weary sailors when first they sight their native country, and pointing to a "better country."

Then they drove on through St. Just, in Penwith's dreary mining district, to Botallick mine, and the way was cheered by the contents of those four hampers.

What Mrs. Bunniewink suffered in driving along the precipitous

road to Botallick mine no words can tell. She stood up. Mr. Bunniwink said, "Maria, sit down." She screamed. Mr. Bunniwink said, "Maria, silence." She could only gasp in peace. Zummy and Drummie wanted to go into the mine, as the Princess of Wales, or rather the Duchess of Cornwall, did: they thought it would be so nice to be under the sea and not in danger of drowning; but the miners would not take them, and they had to content themselves by hearing how the mine ran one hundred fathoms under water.

At last they reached Penzance, as sleepy as possible, and as delighted as possible with their expedition.

"Who knows not Michael's Mount and chair,  
The pilgrims' holy vaunt?  
Both land and island twice a day,  
Both fort and port of haunt."

*Carey's Cornwall.*

The next morning they went to St. Michael's Mount, and as the tide was in, they had to cross in a boat, which was delightful. And when they landed, they saw the little brass foot-print which was let into the granite, where the Queen first set foot when she went to St. Michael's Mount. They also saw the royal handwritings, framed and glazed, together with the quills with which the royal persons wrote when they went to write down their own names in the visitors' book. As they walked round the battlements, Mr. and Mrs. Bunniwink cautioned Zummy and Drummie every three minutes not to fall over, and so they none of them could give proper attention to the beautiful view over Mount's Bay, with the quaint little fishing-towns of Marazion and Mousehole on its shores.

Zummy and Drummie could not fancy the wicked old giant living in such a pretty place as the grey old castle on the grey old Mount, with the rocks peeping up through a carpet of soft turf and wild flowers. They were much interested in looking at the mule-track up to the castle, for the mount is too steep for the commonest cart to get up, and all the coals and provisions have to be carried up on mules.

When they had seen the outside of the castle they went to see the inside. They saw the dining-room, with the lion and the unicorn fighting for the crown over the chimneypiece, and the boar hunt perpetually going on round and round the room (this is carved in wood, *not real*, of course!).

They saw the pretty blue withdrawing-room, and the nurseries, with little white beds looking as if they wanted to be slept in. Then they saw the chapel, where the people of the village go to church, and where there are some curious paintings.

Mr. Bunniewink thought fit to go and sit in the wonderful stone chair, *outside* the castle, which is such a difficult and dangerous adventure, that if a man has sat in it before his wife, he can rule her ever after, and *vice versâ*.

Mr. Bunniewink went for the sake of the view. The tide was out when they returned, so they had the pleasure of walking over the strip of land which joins the mount to the shore, and which the tide covers twice a day.

That afternoon they reached Falmouth, but too late to see anything of the place. On Saturday morning they got a boat, and went in it to see Pendennis and St. Mawes Castles; and they saw the remains of the chain which was stretched across the harbour from castle to castle, to keep out the French in the days of "the old Bony."

They spent the whole day in the boat on the bay, and saw pretty St. Just in Roseland, and the little town of Flushing, and were quite delighted with the old packet station, where all the homeward-bound from the Indies used to land before the days of the "P. and O." and Southampton; when the mail-coach used to drive out of Falmouth, laden with papas and mammas and children, and black nurses in white dresses, and black men-servants in ear-rings, and parrots, and curiosities of all sorts. And now Mr. Bunniewink determined that it was time to turn back, and think of getting home again; and he put a great mark against Falmouth in his Guide-book, to show the limit of his tour, but he thought they had better see one or two more places on the way home.

They went straight from Falmouth to Liskeard by train, and then Mr. Bunniewink "bade adieu to locomotives until he should make his final start for London." He waved his hand to the departing train as it left Liskeard station, but only one old woman noticed him, and she thought he was "mazed."

(To be continued.)



## THE HUNCHBACK.

(NOT BY SHERIDAN KNOWLES.) A BURLESQUE IN ONE ACT, ADAPTED FROM THE ARABIAN NIGHTS.

BY ALFRED SCOTT GATTY.

A BONE-BOUCHE FOR CHRISTMAS.

### *Dramatis Personæ.*

THE CALIPH OF CASGAR. A particularly perspicacious potentate.

THE TAILOR. A small man in every way, except his part here, which is large.

FATIMA. The tailor's wife; a clever woman, who takes her own part.

THE DOCTOR. A Jew, who has a long part, and a long nose. (We hope he *knows* his part.)

ASSAM. A (Green) Tea-merchant, lodging next door to the tailor. *Particeps Criminis.*

THE BARRISTER. A *brief* part.

JOHN BROWN. An English man of business. A silent *part-y*.

COURTIER, PARTISANS, &c., as usual—more so if possible.

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### *Costumes.*

CALIPH. Gorgeous robe de chambre, shawl, sash, scimitar, large green turban. Turkish pipe (while seated on divan), which should be handed to him with due ceremony by an attendant.

TAILOR. Large red turban, white shirt (no coat or waistcoat), brownish shawl girdle, large shears stuck in it. Loose, wide, short brownish trousers, yellow slippers.

FATIMA. Plain loose dress, all of one colour (say dark blue), yellow slippers.

DOCTOR. Old skull cap, red beard, long false nose, enormous spectacles, long blackish robe down to the ground (covering all his other garments, which, consequently, may be those of the nineteenth century).

ASSAM. Should blacken or darken his face and wear a red fez cap, a loose yellow jacket, a figured vest under it, a green sash, wide, short red trousers, white stockings, and red slippers.

THE BARRISTER. Ordinary wig and gown.

JOHN BROWN. White trousers, yellow waistcoat, blue coat with brass buttons, white hat.

THE HUNCHBACK. Gorgeous suit of red, covered with (sham) gold embroidery, trousers, white flannel, with gold stripes, a fez on his head.

(N.B. A lay figure should be made to wear this costume during the earlier scenes.)

The nature of Eastern costume admits of all the above costumes, except those of John Brown and the Hunchback, being worn by ladies.

SCENE.—CASGAR.

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### SCENE I.

*Room in the Tailor's house. Table, with fragments of dinner, in centre. Door left, windows left of centre, fireplace right of centre, chairs, &c. The Hunchback lying a corpse on the floor; Tailor and his wife bending over him.*

H 2

TAILOR [*coming forward, throwing up his hands and eyes*].

O Mahomet! Why did I ask to dinner  
That little wretch? No doubt he was a sinner—  
Else in his throat the fish-bone had not stuck,  
And brought us to this crisis of ill-luck.

WIFE. I've pinched, and pull'd him, but no breath's left in him, 5  
And now my head's with apprehension swimming,  
Lest we should be before the Sultan brought  
And charged with murder—

TAILOR. At the very thought 10  
My legs give way, as if they had no bone,  
And both my feet and hands are cold as stone.

WIFE. Are you aware, this little humpback'd fellow, 15  
Who roams the streets of Casgar, free and mellow,  
Is royal jester at the Caliph's court,  
And charms the lords and ladies with his sport?

TAILOR. Yes, and this night, while resting from my labour, 20  
The wag appear'd, and struck upon his tabor,  
Singing a merry song, which did so charm me,  
I ask'd him in, not thinking it would harm me;  
And wishing you to have a pleasant treat,  
As soon as we had risen from our meat:—  
And there he lies not drunk, but dead!

WIFE. Oh dear! 25  
What shall we do? for I partake your fear;  
However, it's no use to be so frightened—  
Maybe his braces have been overtightened.  
Let out the hump, which may have press'd the lung,  
And put this stoppage on his breath and tongue.

TAILOR. The first thing that I did was to unbutton, 30  
As you suggest; but ah! he's dead as mutton.

WIFE. Well, we must quickly lift him from the floor, 35  
And lay his death at some one else's door.  
You know, my love, the doctor, who's a Jew,  
Lives round the corner—

TAILOR. He'll exactly do. 40  
WIFE. Now use your strength, and lift him on your back,  
And we'll soon foist him on our neighbour Quack.

TAILOR *sings*.

AIR—"Not so bad for me."

I really do not know, my dear,  
What would have been our end,  
Had not this very bright idea  
Struck you about our friend. [*Points at Hunchback.*]

[*Turns to audience.*] And you, my friends assembled here,  
I'm sure will all agree,  
That this idea, plann'd by my dear, [*Points to Wife.*]  
Is not so bad for she.

## CHORUS.

Not so bad, not so bad, not so bad for she. { TAILOR.  
me. { WIFE.  
Don't you really think it is, not so bad for she. { TAILOR.  
me. { WIFE,  
Not so bad, not so bad, not so bad for she. { TAILOR.  
me. { WIFE.  
Think what you may, I still will say, 'tis not so bad for she. { TAILOR.  
me. { WIFE.

## WIFE sings.

Ah, hubby, your're a flatterer,  
You very naughty man ;  
And if you're such a chatterer,  
You'll spoil my little plan ;  
Thro' which, if we can safely steer,  
Why then I will agree,  
That this idea, plann'd by your dear,  
Is not so bad for me.

[*They repeat chorus as above. Then they lift up the body of the Hunchback, and carry it out very slowly, the piano playing "the Dead March" in "Saul." The pianist must continue playing until the return of the Wife. Re-enter Wife cautiously, and turning her head to listen.*]

WIFE. Methought I heard a clattering of feet—  
The policeman can't be coming down the street! [*Looks out.*]  
Bless me! it's only cats. He's now about it. 40  
I hope he'll do the trick, yet I half doubt it.  
Those Jews are very sharp; at any rate,  
I think I did my part [*looking at watch*]: he's very late.  
'Tis now a good half-hour since, or more,  
I left him at the learned doctor's door. 45  
My coward husband held the corpse, while I  
Did ring the bell, and then I saw on high  
A night-capp'd head; but soon my silver fee  
Drew the good doctor, for it fill'd with glee  
His Jewish soul; on that I quickly fled, 50  
And flying nearly pitched upon my head.  
Where is my whipper-snap? [*noise at door*] Halloo, who's here?  
My nerves are shattered.

TAILOR [*entering*]. Only me, my dear.  
[*Tragically.*] I've done the deed! did you not hear a noise? 55  
WIFE. I heard the cats, as if pursu'd by boys  
With sticks and stones, and then I heard a sound.  
TAILOR. Where?  
WIFE. Now on entering.  
TAILOR. Well, I'll be bound 60  
The Rabbi twigged me; on the lowest stair  
I'd scarcely laid the corpse, when all my hair

	Like needles stood, or porcupinal quills. With hurrying steps, and, in his hand, of pills A box gigantic, came the Jewish quack Downstairs, when suddenly upon the back Of the dead Hunchback he did set his foot, And headlong fell upon the mat; his boot Had struck against the royal jester's hump— I fear the Jew is killed, he fell so plump.	65       70
	[ <i>Knock at door.</i> Dear me! dear me! whoever can that be? Don't make a fuss, old man, I'll go and see. [ <i>Goes to door and opens it.</i> Why, bless me, it's the doctor. How d'y'e do? We are so glad to see you.	
WIFE.		
DOCTOR.	And I you, For certain things have come to pass to-day, 'Bout which I wish a word or two to say To your dear spouse.	75
TAILOR.	<i>Cher Docteur,</i> take a chair; Your troubles I most willingly will share.	80
	[ <i>They all three sit down; the Doctor in the middle, the Tailor and his wife on either side.</i>	
DOCTOR.	This evening, when about to go to bed, My servant came to me up-stairs, and said, Below stand two good folk who said to me, Said they, "Your master, miss, we wish to see." Says I, "All right, my master is alone." Said they, quite soft, and in an undertone, Looking at me, they says, "My little dear, You call your master while we two wait here." And many other things which she did say I will keep quiet for another day; Suffice it, in her hand she brought a fee, And I went down, quite pleased, such folk to see. I stumbled—over what I could not tell, But this I <i>knows</i> , that on my nose I fell; Then rising, struck a light, and look'd around, And can you guess, my friends, what there I found?	85                90       95
TAILOR.	A cat?	
WIFE.	A sheep?	
TAILOR.	A log of wood?	
DOCTOR.	No! no! I found some-body there I did not know. In rage I hit him hard upon the head: He neither spake nor mov'd—the man was—— Dead?	100       105
TAILOR AND WIFE.		
DOCTOR.	Exactly so, and when I look'd more near, My knees gave way, I trembled much with fear.	

In fact, I felt my face turn green and yellow  
On finding that it was that humpback'd fellow  
Who acts as jester at the Caliph's court;  
But to suffice, and cut a long tale short, 110  
I lifted up this mass of flesh in haste,  
And tied a rope around his portly waist.  
I took him on the roof, and there I spied,  
Just three doors off, a chimney gaping wide;  
And lifting Hunchey by the shoulders, I 115  
Let go, and down the chimney he did fly.  
Thus ends my tale; what think you of it now?  
I think you have escaped a jolly row;  
So let us make our cares on music float—  
Thanks, doctor, take the pitchfork, give the note. 120

TAILOR.

DOCTOR *sings*.

AIR—"For I am one of the Olden Time."

I really am so jolly, and I feel so full of fun,  
I feel inclined to kiss the hand of each and every one;  
For I am safe, and sound, and snug, who not an hour ago  
Dealt with this foot upon a hump a fearful deadly blow.

*All sing*—CHORUS.

For we really feel so jolly, and we feel so full of fun,  
Let's all commence at once to shake the hands of every one.

*[They shake hands all round, and proceed to next verse.]*

TAILOR *sings*.

I really am so pleased, dear friend, to find you here all right,  
Because you might be hang'd, you know, for what you've done to-night.  
But neither I, nor yet my wife, will tell a single thing,  
So let us all sit down again, and wife, some liquor bring.

*Repeat chorus as above.*

*[They then dance in a circle and shake hands. The Doctor and Tailor sit down at the table, while the wife gets some glasses and a bottle from a cupboard. The following conversation ensues.]*

TAILOR. Whose chimney did you with the body cram?  
DOCTOR. The chimney of our worthy friend Assam.  
TAILOR [*astonished*]. Assam!—he lives next door, then what say you,  
If when we've finished this, my good wife's brew, 125  
We take a stroll?  
DOCTOR. Yes, by all means, and peep,  
In on our friend next door, he's p'raps asleep.  
[*Screams and shouts heard in the distance: they all three spring up.*  
TAILOR. Halloa, what's that?  
WIFE. And that!  
DOCTOR. A scream, I'm sure. 130  
TAILOR. Come along, doctor, there's some fun in store.

*[Exeunt all three, chuckling and laughing.]*

*Curtain.*

END OF SCENE I.

SCENE II.

*The Merchant Assam's Bedroom. Bed, right; fireplace, centre; door, left. Tables, chairs, washstand, &c. Merchant discovered in bed, snoring loudly. Suddenly the body of the Hunchback is to appear down the chimney. Assam wakes in alarm.*

ASSAM. Halloo! dear me, this really is annoying,  
To be woke up when I was just enjoying  
A nap. O gracious! [*looks at fireplace*] how my poor head swims,  
I feel a sort of creeping o'er my limbs. 135  
Here, help! help! Murder! Shallallah! thunder!  
I'll hide my frightened head the bedclothes under.  
No, that won't do; what shall I do? oh dear!  
To think that I must die 'cause no one's near.  
I should so like, before I really die, 140  
To give that pilfering scamp a good black eye.  
I feel my hair is starting from the root—  
A boot! a boot! my kingdom for a boot!  
[*Sees boot on floor.*] Ah, there is one, and haply with one shot  
I may destroy the villain on the spot. 145  
Now for it, Assam, pull yourself together,  
And show the scamp your boot is of good leather.

[*Throws the boot: the body of Hunchback falls on its face.*]

Hurrah! I've hit him, and I thought I should:  
My arm's so strong, my aim so very good;  
But if the fellow's dead, why then, I guess, 150  
I've got myself into a precious mess.

[*Enter Doctor, followed by Tailor and his Wife. They rush to the bed.*]

DOCTOR [*fussily*]. Bless me, my friend, whatever is the matter?  
You'll wake the whole of Casgar with your clatter.  
While sitting with my friend the tailor, I  
Did hear afar your wild and sudden cry; 155  
And leaping from our chairs, we hurried out  
To find the cause of all this noise and rout.  
ASSAM. O doctor, I'm so very very glad  
To see you here; I feel uncommon bad.  
Look there! [*points to fireplace*] and see the cause of all my ills; 160  
I feel as though I'd taken tons of pills.  
DOCTOR. Good gracious me! what is it that I see?  
The humpback'd jester? Horror! humph! bless me!

[*Adjusts his spectacles, and examines the corpse of the jester—a good deal of fun can be made of this—feeling pulse, &c. Then he turns to Assam, who has got out of bed, and says:*]

ASSAM. He's faint or drunk, but which I cannot say.  
I soon will find out which. Hi, there, make way! 165  
[*Rushes at Hunchback, and beats him well.*]  
Now that is done, once more I will to bed.

WITZ. Nay, stay! I think the poor man's really dead!

ALL. Dead?

DOCTOR [*who has again looked at him*]. Yes, he's dead!



AGNES.

Oh horror! is it so? 170

He must have died from that *boot-i*-full blow.

[*To Doctor.*] Dear doctor, try and make him live again.

DOCTOR. His *sole* is gone; my *heeling* is in vain.

AGNES [*pathetically*]. Oh dear! I shall be hung as sure as fate.

- WIFE. No, stop, I have a plan, it's not too late. 175  
 My plan is this, take Hunchback, neck and crop,  
 And prop him up against some neighbouring shop.
- ASSAM. Good thought, my friend, now let us shake a paw.
- WIFE. No, *pauses* off, Pompey, let us *pause* no more.
- [*Going up to body.*] Here doctor, will you kindly lift his feet? 180  
 Then you and I will bear him to the street.

[*Exeunt Doctor, Tailor, and Wife—Wife and Doctor bearing the body. The piano to play the "Dead March" again.*]

ASSAM *sings Parody on Burial of the Linnet.\**

Found in the chimney, stiff as a sentry  
 Shot at his post, yet remaining upright :  
 Surely some one of our resident gentry  
 Merits a share of my trouble to-night.

Whether this vision of Humpty the jester  
 Be joke of other, or one of his own ;  
 I am absolved, and I don't care a tester  
 Who may be next with old Hunchback alone.

'Tis nice to have such inquisitive neighbours  
 As Jew and Tailor have proved in this case ;  
 I wish them well at the end of their labours,  
 Finding the jester his next halting-place.

Oh dear, that word makes me think of a halter,  
 Which even now may be hanging o'er me ;  
 Onward, ye brave, in your course never falter,  
 Pitch Humpty anywhere, so that I'm free.

ASSAM [*alone*]. Then, Assam, you're a murderer—dear me !  
 To think my boot should make me what you see.  
 Humph ! well, I'm tired, so I'll be off to bed,  
 And on my downy pillow lay my head.

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[*He gets into bed, and sings dreamily.*]

AIR—"I really am so Sleepy." †  
 I'm going to try and sing a song,  
 I don't know if I can,  
 For the truth is this, I really am  
 A very sleepy man.  
 But if I can remember it,  
 I hope you'll pardon me  
 If now and then I give a yawn  
 For it wakes me up you see—

*Spoken.* Yes, I really do hope I shall remember the words, but if not you must  
 forgive me, for—

*Chorus.* I really am so sleepy, so sleepy, so sleepy,  
 I really am so sleepy, you'll forgive me I hope if I yawn.

\* Aunt Judy's Magazine, No. V.

† Published by R. Cocks and Co.; reprinted by permission.

When I was quite a little boy,  
 And used to go to school,  
 My master always thought me  
 A most egregious fool.  
 For when he set me work to learn,  
 I'd steal off all alone ;  
 And then and there would fall asleep  
 Before the work was done.

*Spoken.* Yes, then my master would catch me, and give me such a shaking, on which I'd roll over and say—

*Chorus.* I really, &c.

I'm married, and my wife has got  
 A temper of her own ;  
 And there's nought she likes so much as  
 With poor me to pick a bone.  
 But I've a plan for stopping her,  
 Which is both safe and sure,  
 There's no expense, it's learnt at once,  
 And is a perfect cure.

*Spoken.* Yes ; it consists in this, when your wife begins holding forth, break in upon her volubility with this refrain—

*Chorus.* I really, &c.

I really am so sleepy now,  
 I must retire to bed ;  
 I hope you are not vexed, my friends,  
 At anything I've said.

*Get slower as you sing these lines.* { Don't ask me please to sing again,  
 Because I simply shan't ;  
 And if you ask me why that is,  
 'Tis really 'cause I can't.

[*Have here a fearful fit of yawning while you play the Chorus half way through, then say, Oh ! by Jove ! I beg your pardon, but you must forgive me as—*

*Chorus.* I really, &c.

[*Yawns all through the song must be introduced at the discretion of the singer.*]

[*He falls asleep and snores. Enter Doctor, Tailor, and Wife, hurriedly. Wife goes to the bed and shakes Assam.*

*WIFE.* Wake up, old sleepy, 'tis no time for sleep,  
 It would be more appropriate to weep. [*Shakes him.*]

*ASSAM* [*sleepily*]. Hallo—o—o ! Whom have we here, a friend or foe ?

*WIFE.* Friend—wake up, old man.

*ASSAM.* No, no, not for Joe.

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*DOCTOR.* Assam, you must wake up.

*ASSAM* [*from under the bedclothes*]. No, that I shan't.

*DOCTOR* [*throwing up his eyes*]. Oh shame, thou sluggard, get thee to the ant,  
 Her ways consider, and be wise !

*ASSAM.* Oh dear !

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I see I shall not sleep by lying here,  
 So I'll get up [*gets out of bed*].

- TAILOR [*slapping him on the back*]. Ah! that is right, old chap,  
We soon will go, then you may take your nap—  
We want to tell you what we've done. 200
- ASSAM. All right.
- TAILOR. We took the Hunchback, and plac'd him upright  
Against a neighbouring door—
- WIFE [*breaking in*]. Just eight doors down,  
And on the scraper I have torn my gown. 205
- TAILOR [*testily*]. Bother! Be quiet! What do we care for that!
- WIFE [*tartly*]. You hold your tongue, or I'll knock off your hat.
- DOCTOR. Let dogs delight to bark and bite, not you—  
Allow me then, my friends, to take the cue:  
We placed the Hunchback 'gainst a neighb'ring door,  
The number of which house I think is four. 210
- WIFE. No, three I'm sure.
- TAILOR. No, five, I think I'll swear.
- DOCTOR. Bless me! I never did see such a pair:  
No matter numbers—when we'd done this deed,  
To stop and watch a bit we all agreed. 215  
We hid; and presently we saw appear  
A Christian merchant, who was drunk, I fear;  
He roll'd about, and scraps of music sang,  
And soon against the Hunchback he came, bang. 220  
They both fell down, and struggled for a space:  
We saw the merchant strike the Hunchback's face;  
Then, fearing that the watch might soon appear,  
We hurried off, and rush'd in haste up here.
- ASSAM. Well done! I thank you very much, indeed,  
But as of sleep I greatly am in need,  
And as the time is now quite half-past four,  
Without offence, I'll show you to the door. 225
- TAILOR [*going out*]. Good-night!
- WIFE [*ditto*]. Good-night! 230
- DOCTOR [*ditto*]. Good-night!
- ASSAM [*alone*]. Good-night, Hurrah!  
I never saw such stickers as they are.
- [*To audience.*] Well, now I'll bid you all good-night once more,  
And please don't wake me, if perchance I snore. 235

[*Gets into bed and draws curtains.*]

*Curtain.*

END OF SCENE II.

## SCENE III.

*Caliph's Court. A divan, centre; tables, left and right; covered with refreshments.*

*Caliph sitting cross-legged on divan, surrounded by courtiers, &c. On the left are standing John Brown, the English merchant, Assam, and a Barrister in wig and gown. On right are standing the Tailor and his Wife and the Doctor: they are all in chains. In front of the divan lies the body of the Hunchback. As the curtain draws up there should be a blast on penny trumpets.*

**CALIPH** [*rising*]. How now, ye varlets! By Mahomet I swear  
I'll cut your heads clean off—what makes you stare?

[*They all bow low.*]

Now then, you guy in wig and dusky gown [*to Barrister*],  
Tell me at once your tale, or fear my frown.

**BARRISTER.** Most mighty Caliph, since you bid me tell  
My tale, as it is long, I may as well  
Begin at once. 240

**CALIPH.** Yes, do; I'm in a rage.

[*The Barrister can read this speech off a roll of paper.*]

**BARRISTER.** Well then, most puissant monarch, and most sage,  
This morning, ere the day had well nigh broke, 245  
My servant came, and quickly me awoke;  
He said our friend, the Hunchback jester there,  
Had met with treatment that was hardly fair,  
From one John Brown, a Christian, who last night  
On quarts of Bass's beer got very "tight;" 250  
As he came rolling home, 'twixt three and four,  
Our friend the Hunchback here he stumbled o'er.  
That's all we know, and all we can find out—  
That Brown was "fresh," I think there is no doubt,  
And, possibly, his liquor was "Brown Stout." 255

**CALIPH** [*to Brown*]. Thou Christian dog, I'll kill thee, sure as fate.

**BARRISTER.** Will your great highness for a moment wait? [*Sultan nods.*]  
When I had pass'd death sentence on John Brown,  
There rose a man at once, with eyes cast down,  
Who said, "Let not the innocent be slain; 260  
I must confess, although it gives me pain,  
That I'm the murderer, not he."

**CALIPH.** Bless me! [*Throws his eyes up.*]

**BARRISTER** [*to Caliph*]. The case, sire, is most strange, as you will see.  
The man was Assam, merchant of Bagdad, 265  
Who told his tale, and made his crime as bad;  
Then there appeared the Jewish doctor, who  
Declared that he had kill'd the Hunchback too.  
I then tried him, and sentenced him for life,  
When there came forth this tailor and his wife, 270  
Who say that they are guilty—not the rest—  
Your highness then sent for us.

- CALIPH [*astonished*]. Well, I'm blest !  
 Bring forth the tailor and his wife, and I  
 These two black villains on this spot will try. 275
- [*The Tailor and his Wife are led forward trembling before the Caliph.*]
- CALIPH [*angrily*]. Thou tailor dog, thou first unfold thy *tail*.  
 TAILOR [*timidly*]. Most noble Caliph, deeply I bewail  
 The death of Hunchey. Good sooth, I'm cut up,  
 And feel as tho' I'd lost a friend—
- CALIPH [*breaking in*]. Shut up ! 280  
 I don't care *how* you feel : here, housewife, you  
 Begin, but mind that all you say is true.
- WIFE [*curtsying*]. Yes sir, I always speak the truth, and so  
 I promise to tell everything I know. 285  
 My husband ask'd the Hunchback in last night  
 To dinner, which I know was not quite right ;  
 At any rate he came in.
- CALIPH [*eagerly*]. Who ?  
 WIFE [*curtsying*]. The jester,  
 And of good appetites he had the best, sir, 290  
 I've ever seen—
- CALIPH [*angrily*]. Well, what care I ?—proceed.  
 WIFE. We had some fish, sir, boil'd in aniseed,  
 Of which the dwarf partook, and in his throat 295  
 A fish-bone seem'd to stick, for with a note  
 Of wild despair he fell upon the floor,  
 And when we felt his pulse, it beat no more !  
 In terror we then forth the body bore,  
 And laid it at our friend the doctor's door.  
 So ends our tale. 300
- CALIPH. 'Tis well ! A bone you said,  
 Stuck in my jester's throat, and kill'd him dead ?  
 WIFE. Yes, so we thought.
- CALIPH [*turning to the Doctor*]. Then doctor, come thou here.  
 You're skilled in herbs and surgery, I hear. 305
- \* DOCTOR [*advances, singing*].  
 How do, my friends ? How are you all ? I hope you're very ill !  
 For then, I trust, you let me sell you just von leetle pill.  
 They're made of rhubarb, squills and butter, soap and flour and cheese,  
 The more you takes, the less you wants ;—I know they vill you please.
- Chorus. Oh my ! is any von ill, is any von ill, is any von ill ?  
 Oh my ! is any von ill, is any von ill, Oh my !  
 I'm a  
 Jolly old Quack, Quack, Quack,  
 What carries his pack on his back ;  
 I've plasters and pills ; I've rhubarb and squills,  
 And they call me Medicine Jack.

\* "Medicine Jack," is published by R. Cocks and Co. ; reprinted by permission.

I never sell inferior qual-i-ty of med-i-cine,  
 For that would be, as we all know, von big monstrous sin;  
 I've pills for leetle baby,—I've pills for dear mamma,  
 And pills for brothers, sisters, nieces, aunts, and kind papa.

*Chorus.* Oh my! &c.

My plaster, it is vaary goot for pains in head, in hair;  
 For pains in arms, for pains in legs, for pains in everywhere.  
 You varm it at the fire and apply it vaary hard,  
 'Tis vaary goot, and vaary cheap, price fourteen pence the yard.

*Chorus.* Oh my, &c.

My draughts they keep out draughts, and colds out of your head;  
 They should be taken late at night before you go to bed,  
 And when you do prepare a dose, give it one great big shake,  
 And in a glass of water you von tablespoon should take.

*Chorus.* Oh my! &c.

D'you want to have some teeth drawn out, if so I am de man,  
 I've tweezers, crusahers, pincers, spades, and pickaxe, in my van;  
 I can pull you out a dozen teeth vithout de slightest pain,  
 And then, as quick as lightning I can stick them in again.

*Chorus.* Oh my! &c.

You will not buy my med-i-cine? var-goot, I do know why!  
 Because you think poor Med-i-cine Jack has told you von big lie!  
 But I have told the truth to you, on my vord I do swear,  
 And since you will not buy my goods, I'll go and try elsewhere!

*Chorus.* Oh my! &c.

CALIPH. Well! here's a patient, who is ill enough—  
 Now let us see the virtue of your stuff;  
 Probe down his throat, and bring the fish-bone out,  
 And you shall be rewarded, have no doubt.

*[Doctor advances to the body and pretends to probe the throat: after a time, and sounds of coughing, he produces the fish-bone; at the same moment the Hunchback springs up alive. The bone apparently extracted might be a large marrow-bone, to aid the joke.]*

CALIPH *[with arms up and wide open]*.

Good gracious me, whatever do I see,  
 Old Hunchback all alive? 310

ALL *[together]*. Ha! ha! He! he!

CALIPH. Hurrah!

TAILOR *[alone]*. Hurrah!

WIFE *[to her husband]*. Will you not make less din? 315

TAILOR *[turning his back on her]*. For you, my dear, I now don't care one pin.

*[Tailor snaps his fingers at Wife.]*

CALIPH. Silence! and now, my jester, please relate  
 What were your feelings in your senseless state?

HUNCHBACK. Your majesty, my throat feels rather dry,  
 Let me first drink; I'll tell you by-and-by. 320

CALIPH. 'Tis well—bring liquor in a golden bowl,  
 It will invigorate our royal soul.

Take off those fetters, every one is free—  
It seems our jester has been "on the spree."

ALL [*together*]. Hurra, hurra, hurra, hurra, hurra!

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CALIPH. Silence; let's drink and sing all care away.

[*They all retire to tables right and left, where they fill bowls of wine; then they all advance to front.*]

HUNCHBACK *sings*.

AIR—"Frog he would a wooing go."

Hunchey would a larking go,

ALL. Heigho, says Roly,

HUNCHBACK. Whether the Caliph would let him or no,

ALL. With a roly poly, gammon and spinach, heigho says Anthony Roly.

HUNCHBACK. Hunchey went with the Tailor to dine,

ALL. Heigho, &c.

HUNCHBACK. A bone stuck in his throat, for he'd had too much wine,

ALL. With a roly, &c.

HUNCHBACK. Hunchey then remembered no more,

ALL. Heigho, &c.

HUNCHBACK. Till he found himself lying quite dead on this floor,

ALL. With a roly, &c.

[*Change suddenly to "Come Home, dear Father."*]

WIFE. Farewell, dear audience, our play is now done,

We're all very sorry indeed;

But it is now time that we all were at home,

As of sleep we must stand much in need.

I hope you are pleas'd with our poor little play,

The acting of which is more fun

Than sitting and list'ning; at any rate now,

This evening's performance is done.

CHORUS.

ALL [*sing in parts*]. We hope you are pleased with our poor little play,

The acting of which is more fun

Than sitting and watching; at any rate now,

This evening's performance is done.

Good-bye! Good-bye! Good-bye!

"Till our next happy meeting, good-bye.

*Curtain falls.*


*Distribution of Characters at fall of Curtain.*

Brown. Barrister. Doctor. Hunchback. Caliph. Assam. Tailor. Wife.  
*Courtiers in the background.*



## THE CHRISTMAS TOURNAMENT.

## CHAPTER I.

 ANYTHING new for the children this year? said Mr. Eardley to his wife, when he saw her cutting the bulky Christmas supplement of the 'Illustrated London News;' "they seem very anxious for the Christmas Number to come, though it always appears to me very dull."

"Well," said mamma, "I think there is something new here. Look at this"—and she handed to her husband a picture called 'The Tournament.' It represented several good-natured fathers and uncles (probably) on their hands and knees enacting horses for the benefit of their small riders—sturdy little fellows who were vigorously belabouring each other with sofa-bolsters. "I think that is not a bad idea; how would it do for our party of little folks on Thursday? I wanted to find something new, to fill up the time before the Christmas-tree is lighted."

"The boys would like it well enough, no doubt," said papa; "but what about the mammas? You are a strong-minded mother, and happily have no nerves left for knocks and scratches; but how about others?"

"Oh!" replied mamma; "boys' heads are very thick, and our dining-room carpet is thick too, and the chance of a tumble is half the fun."

"Then have it by all means. I shall be delighted to do my part as a horse; there is nothing like enlarging one's ideas by fresh experiences."

"My dear! how can you think of such a thing, with your chest? No—I can manage. There is Fred, and one or two others I think I can reckon upon."

Mr. Eardley was a barrister, and his home was therefore in London, so that his three children, Katie, Walter, and Bob, respectively aged eleven, ten, and eight, had no large experience of that children's paradise—a country home. Still they were three very joyous little mortals; and the large dining-room in Russell Square was a capital place for blind-man's-buff, Tom Titler, and the like diversions, and just now they were looking forward not a little to the long-promised party, which was fixed for the Thursday after Christmas Day.

Their mother's announcement of the proposed tournament was received with acclamations, especially by Katie and Walter, who had lately been listening with extreme delight to 'Ivanhoe.' Both boys, of course, begged to be knights; but mamma decided that one would be enough, and that Bob was too little to have a chance against older boys; and then seeing that his face grew long, and somewhat puckered up about the corners of the mouth, she added, "But I tell you what, Bob, we must have you for a little herald; I will make you a cap and a tabard (that is what heralds wear), and you shall have a trumpet to sound the 'knights to the charge.'"

This revived Master Bob's spirits, and he joined in the eager discussion that followed as to who the other knights were to be.

"Seven; oh; mamma, we must have seven!" exclaimed Katie, who had rather a turn for chivalric tales, and especially revered the Seven Champions.

"Be it so," said mamma; "then here is Walter for one; now make haste and choose the other six."

This was a long business, and seemed to require so much time that mamma, whose spare moments were precious, said she could wait no longer; they might decide amongst themselves, and tell her in the evening.

"Well," said mamma, as the children gathered round the fire for that cosy half-hour before dinner that they always talked of as "our time," and on which account they much resented their parents dining out, "is the knotty point settled yet?"

"Not quite, mamma," answered Katie; "we have got into a puzzle, and we want you to help us."

"What! the whole day passed in discussing the matter, and these redoubtable champions not chosen after all?" said papa; "you are a nice set of people to decide questions of such high moment!"

"Now, papa, don't laugh at us. It really is a puzzle. We are to have seven knights, and Walter is one; and we have eight boys coming. How are we to manage? we cannot leave any out."

"Well, mamma, what do you say? you have generally a cure for all difficulties."

"Suppose," said mamma, "you have a second herald, and a page; you must have a page, you know, to attend on the Queen of Beauty."

"What a clever, good darling of a mother you are!" said Kate; "and what a goose I am! Of course that is the very thing."

The knights were soon fixed on. They were to be the children's cousins, Hugh Feilding, and Arthur Jervis, and four of Walter's schoolfellows—Edward Osborne, Ralph Weston, Richard Hunter, and Philip Ward.

"Not bad names for knights," said papa; "it is a curious coincidence."

"Now let us make a list," said mamma; "but what are we to call them? 'Sir Walter' and 'Sir Hugh' do not sound well without some other name."

"Walter might be 'de Russell,'" said his father, "as he lives in Russell Square. Where do the other boys live? Could you not name them in the same way?"

"Let me see. Arthur and Hugh—Montague Place, and Beaufort Gardens. That will be capital; 'de Montague' and 'de Beaufort' look very grand. Then the others; there are Sir Edward de Berkeley, Sir Ralph de Bryanstone, Sir Richard de Wimpole, and Sir Philip—I do not like 'de Lowndes.'"

"Sir Philip de Belgravia," suggested papa; and so it was arranged; and papa proceeded to draw a kind of shield, with all sorts of funny black flourishes, and wrote all the knights' names on it.

"Edith Weston should be Queen; she would be such a jolly one, and she has such stunning hair," said Walter.

"Oh, yes! we must have Edith. Could we not make her Queen, mamma?" cried Katie.

"I think the Queen must be chosen by lot, childie," said mamma; "or it would be an invidious distinction."

"The knights will choose her, then," said Walter, proudly; "I shall certainly vote for Edith, and try and get the other fellows to do the same."

"Should not each of the knights have a lady, for whom they fight, and whose colours they wear?" asked Katie.

"Yes; that's a good thought, Katie. I was just considering how to bring the little girls into the performance; it would be dull for them to be only lookers-on, and have no share in it. Yes; they shall draw lots for the knights, and you shall be my handy little work-woman, and help me to make some coloured bows, two of each colour one for the lady to wear, and the other for her to give her knight."

"That will be beautiful, mammie dear; and the knights must have helmets, and coloured scarfs, and—oh! a whole host of things."

"Then," said papa, "a whole host of things will be too many to discuss now, and here is dinner to discuss instead; so now young ones leave mamma and me in peace till dessert-time, when, if you can come down from knightly deeds and dresses, to think of almonds and raisins, you may show yourselves in the dining-room."

Need it be told how many times the children fought the battle o'er in the few days that intervened before the eventful Thursday? Even the usually much-longed for and gloated over Christmas presents scarcely diverted their thoughts from the all-important theme of "the passage of arms," as Katie loved to call it.

We have made no mention of the horses, but they were too important to be overlooked. Uncle Fred, papa's younger brother, who spoilt every child in general, and nephews and nieces in particular, was of course one; and cousin George was another. Mamma found five other kind friends, who were very happy to give the young knights a mount, only stipulating that they might be allowed knee-pads!

Uncle Fred drew up a code for the tourney; a prominent rule of which was, that under no circumstances should a knight strike or kick his horse, and that any one guilty of so un-knightly and dishonourable an act should be considered unworthy to compete in the renowned tournament; from which, as papa said, it was easy to see that a horse had a voice in the matter, and he went on to conjecture what would be the rules framed by other horses, could they, poor things, express their opinions.

Papa wrote out the challenge, beginning "Oyez! Oyez! Oyez! This is to declare and proclaim, &c., &c.," and gave it to herald Bob to read, and that young gentleman being rather quick at jumping to conclusions, convulsed his audience by reading very solemnly, and with great emphasis, "Oyster, Oyster, Oyster;" on which Katie said they ought to "pat his head," and proceeded to explain that she intended a pun (*patties*), and papa said that if her puns wanted explanation she had better leave them out. And so with sense and nonsense the days passed on; and poor mamma and nurse stitched and pasted helmets, &c., and the children talked and laughed, and did not do much of anything.

## CHAPTER II.

AND now the evening had come. The children were excited and eager—for mamma would not let them go into the dining-room, and they had heard some hammering, which stimulated their curiosity still more. Bob wanted to peep through the key-hole, but his brother told him he would be "a dirty little sneak" if he did, so he desisted, and, we will hope, felt ashamed of himself.

As soon as the children had all come, the knights were informed of the proud destiny that awaited them, and, to judge from their brightening faces, they thought the plan promised fun.

The two smallest boys, Tommy Feilding and Willie Ward, younger brothers of Sir Hugh de Beaufort and the Belgravian knight, were told off to their respective posts. Willie was page; he was a pretty little dark-haired fellow of six, and would be as charming a little page to look at as ever served a Queen of Beauty. Tom, who was older, was to be the second herald.

The Queen was chosen, and proved to be Edith, after all; but we venture to think there was coercion used (though not bribery), for Walter and Hugh stationed themselves by each unfortunate knight as he voted, and thundered into his ear, "Say Edith." I doubt whether mamma would have allowed this, but she was busy with the finishing touches in the dining-room, and was obliged to leave the young ones to their own devices, under the auspices of her sister, "Aunt Nellie," and some other grown-up guests.

Soon afterwards the boys were summoned to be equipped, and the Queen and her two maids of honour (Katie, and Susan Hunter) had to be adorned in their turn; and at last the time came, and the tournament was to begin.

It was certainly a very pretty and picturesque scene: let me try to describe it. Down the whole length of the floor a broad white tape was nailed to represent the lists. At the upper end of the lists, Sir Arthur de Montague was stationed on his good steed, his weapon (the bolster) firmly held under his arm; he was prepared to do battle on behalf of the Queen of Beauty against all comers. At the lower end of the lists, the rest of the knights crowded together, all mounted; the horses being occupied in settling various minor points of arrangement.

Over the throne of the Queen of Beauty a canopy of crimson with golden bands looked very imposing; what matter that it was only glazed calico, when the smallest effort of imagination converted it into silken hangings? The wall at the back of the throne was also covered with crimson (marvellously like the dining-room table-cloth). The lower part of it was bright with gorgeous emblazonry; coats of arms, of course, though some one audaciously whispered that that was the Chinese silk from the Summer Palace, that cousin George brought mamma from Pekin. But the throne itself—Could it be that that was the old school-room sofa, on whose ears (for if walls have ears, why should not sofas?) have fallen so many fragments of Katie's lessons? and which, to go back to earlier days, had been by turns—Robinson Crusoe's hut, a smuggler's cave, a ship, a besieged fortress, a shop, and what not besides? What could not mamma's magic fingers effect? They had transformed the old sofa into a throne splendid with scarlet and silken draperies; a raised seat in the middle for the Queen, and lower ones at the sides for her attendants. The little Queen looked very regal in her long scarlet train (which Katie's quick eyes recognised as mamma's opera cloak), an ermine tippet, and a crown set with turquoises and pearls, which accorded well with the golden hair and bright-blue eyes of the little damsel. The maids of honour had silver circlets, from which hung white veils, and blue scarfs over their shoulders fastened with large gilt bows, which had been the objects of Katie's admiration since she saw her mamma buy them for the large sum of sixpence each.

In the front of the Queen stood the little page, arrayed in a scarlet tunic, with a black velvet cap, and white feather. He seemed wonder-struck at his Queen's golden crown, and looked at her with great respect, mixed with a little awe, as she was perched high above his head.

The heralds stood one at each end of the lists, and looked very gay and somewhat grotesque in their yellow and scarlet tabards, which mamma made like square handkerchiefs fastened together on the shoulders with scarlet bows; black caps with red and yellow rosettes, and red stockings drawn over their shoes with bows on them, completed their attire. I must not forget their trumpets, which they were in no danger of forgetting, and which had little red and yellow flags on them.

The room was brightly lighted up, and the knights' silver helmets

(pasteboard with tin-foil), shone brilliantly. A coloured scarf and a helmet were the only additional equipments mamma gave them, as she thought armour would be in their way.

Papa, as he could not be a horse, said he would be Marshal of the Course; and the children were delighted at seeing him looking so quaint and grim in his black gown, tied round the waist with a large coloured scarf, and a great mace in his hand.

Papa was too wise to entrust Master Bob again with the challenge, so it was read by herald Tom instead; and it stated that the noble knight, Sir Arthur de Montague, was "prepared and willing to do battle with any knight of any country or place soever who should venture to deny that the sovereign Lady, Queen Edith, was the fairest and most peerless lady in the realm."

Now the trumpets were to sound to the charge. But, alas! herald Bob, who had an inveterate habit of twiddling, had so tormented and twisted the mouthpiece of his trumpet, that it would only give a spasmodic squeak. Herald Tom, however, blew his trumpet bravely; only having found the use of his lungs (and of his trumpet), saw no reason for leaving off.

Sir Ralph de Bryanstone was the first to meet Sir Arthur, but his career was short, as at the first touch of Sir Arthur's well-directed bolster, over went poor Sir Ralph, amongst the laughter and shouts of the audience. Then another, and another, and still all fell before Sir Arthur's victorious weapon, till Sir Walter de Russell appeared, and lo and behold poor Sir Arthur rolled off, and even lost his helmet!

Both heralds got so excited that, instead of keeping in their places, whenever a knight went down, they skipped into the middle to see the fun.

The little girls watched their knights with great interest, and one, little Maye Jervis, was so unhappy at seeing her champion vanquished, that she appealed to uncle Fred—

"Oh! please do give Sir Edward de Berkeley another ride, for he is my knight, and I do so want him to win;" which good-natured uncle Bob did; but, alas! for poor Maye, Sir Edward went over like a nine-pin as soon as Sir Walter charged against him; on which Maye exclaimed—

"Oh! he's down again—he's a bad boy; I won't speak to him."

The knights had several trials each, ending with a fierce encounter

between Sir Walter and Sir Hugh de Beaufort; in which Sir Walter was unhorsed, and Sir Hugh remained victor of the field.

He then rode up to the throne, and the Queen made a nice little speech, though she nearly giggled in the middle, and put a green wreath round the victor's helmet, and bestowed another token upon him as a prize, viz., a knife which mamma had provided, as she doubted how much a boy would care for a green wreath alone.

The Queen summoned the page to bring a silver goblet, and she pledged the knight, and then gave it to him. A voice from the audience exclaimed, "Give some to your horse," which Sir Hugh accordingly did, and then the other knights got hold of the cup, and it was passed about and finished, so that perhaps it was as well that mamma had taken the precaution to mix plenty of water with the sherry. The victor lastly received a little bouquet, with which he ambled off in search of his lady, and presented it to her with a low bow.

And now the tourney was over, and the knights dismounted, doubtless to the satisfaction of their steeds. Some of the latter had appeared so reconciled to their four-footed posture, that mamma afterwards declared that she heard uncle Fred and cousin George discussing the probabilities of a long frost.

I think no one was sorry when tea was announced. A little procession was soon formed. The Marshal led in the Queen, the page bearing up her train. Then came the maids of honour and their knights, and the other knights and maidens followed. The two heralds came last, blowing their trumpets as loud as possible, herald Bob having got the refractory screw put right by uncle Fred. It was certainly discovered that neither fighting, nor being thrown, had at all impaired the knights' appetite for twelfth cake.

The tea was followed by a Christmas-tree, and that was the wind-up of what Walter described as "the jolliest party we ever had."

And now, little readers, I must tell you, in conclusion, that this is a true tale of a true tournament, where many little knights distinguished themselves, and not very long ago either. The old house which was the scene of it has now passed into the hands of strangers, and probably the writer will never enter its walls again; but of the many memories that the thought of it recalls to her, none shine more brightly than the recollection of the faces of the knights and ladies at the Christmas Tournament.

F.